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SRI K. VINAYAKAM : On a point of information, Sir, it has been established that summon should not be served on hon. Member within the precincts of the House. When this is so is it in order for the Judicial Officers to send summons to the hon. Members to be served on them, while the House is in session. I have been invited to give witness in a case during this session which amounts to taking me away from doing the laudable service in this House.

DEPUTY SPEAKER : The hon. the Leader of the House has explained the position. Permission of the House could have been obtained if the hon. Member, Sri K. Vinayakam, had informed the House earlier.

IV.—ANNOUNCEMENTS.

(1) (1) BILLS PASSED BY THE COUNCIL.

DEPUTY SPEAKER : I have to announce to the House that the following Bills have been passed by the Council without any recommendations— 10 a.m.

1. The Madras Agricultural Income-tax (Amendment) Bill, 1961 (L.A. Bill No. 12 of 1961).

2. The Madras General Sales Tax (Second Amendment) Bill, 1961 (L.A. Bill No. 15 of 1961).

3. The Madras (Added Territory) Extension of Laws Bill, 1961 (L.A. Bill No. 16 of 1961).

4. The Madras Agricultural Income-tax (Extension to Added Territory) Bill, 1961 (L.A. Bill No. 23 of 1961).

I have also to announce to the House that the Madras Wakf (Supplementary) Bill, 1961 (L.A. Bill No. 10 of 1961). has been passed by the Council without any amendment.

(2) NOMINATION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS TO ASSOCIATE WITH THE COMMITTEE ON SUBORDINATE LEGISLATION.

DEPUTY SPEAKER : I have also to announce to the House that the following three Members have been nominated by the Council to associate with the Committee on Subordinate Legislation for the financial year 1961-62.

1. Sri V. Rengasamy.
2. Sri L. S. Karayalar.
3. Sri Mohamed Raza Khan.

V.—CALLING ATTENTION TO SUDDEN RISE IN PRICE OF RICE.

SRI T. S. RAMASWAMI : Sir, under Rule 41 of the Assembly Rules, I call the attention of the Hon. the Minister for Home to a matter of urgent public importance, viz., the sudden rise in the price of rice.

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* THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM: Sir, I wish to make the following statement on this matter.

The Government are keeping a close watch over the price trends of foodgrains and are receiving regular reports regarding prices. According to the reports received, the following were the wholesale prices of rice (II sort) in some of the important Centres during the months of February and March, 1961;

		February 1961. PER MAUND.	March, 1961. PER MAUND.
Madras City	..	20.92	20.91
Kumbakonam	..	21.56	21.50
Vellore	..	20.25	21.17
Madurai	..	21.47	20.96

There have been only slight fluctuations in the prices during March, 1961 as compared to the prices prevailing in February 1961. There are similar fluctuations in the retail price of rice also. In any event, there has not been any sudden spurt in the price of rice.

The Government are no doubt aware that the prices of rice now prevailing are comparatively higher than those, which prevailed during the corresponding period last year. In view of this, they have since ordered the continuance of Fair Price Shops in all the districts in which they are functioning up to the end of April 1961.

As regards the inadequacy of stocks in Fair Price Shops, there was a temporary break in the supply of rice to Fair Price Shops in the first two weeks of March 1961, due to the following reasons: The Government had originally expected that Fair Price Shops opened for distribution of rice might be closed down by the end of February, 1961. But, in view of the higher prices, it was decided to continue the Fair Price Shops beyond 28—2—1961 and orders were issued accordingly. There was also a large quantity of unlifted stock of rice with the Regional Director (Food), Madras against the allotment made by the Central Government to this State for the current season. But, it was later reported that the Regional Director (Food) had stopped the supply of rice to Fair Price Shops after 28—2—1961 on the ground that he had sanction from the Government of India to supply rice only up to 28—2—1961. When this was brought to the notice of the Government, the matter was taken up with the Union Government immediately and the supply of rice to the Fair Price Shops was resumed.

So far as Madras City is concerned, the T.U.C.S. Limited, which is one of the Co-operative Organisations to which certain Fair Price Shops have been entrusted did not draw any supplies from the Regional Director (Food), even during February 1961,

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on the ground that about 6,000 bags of boiled rice drawn from the Regional Director (Food) earlier had been locked up with it since January 1961 for want of demand due to alleged bad quality. The T.U.C.S. was also not willing to draw supplies of even raw rice for distribution through the Fair Price Shops until it was able to dispose of the boiled rice lying with it. Probably, some inconvenience was caused to the public drawing supplies from the Fair Price Shops of the T.U.C.S. Now that the Regional Director (Food) has revived the supply of rice and that the T.U.C.S. Limited has also disposed of the stocks of boiled rice lying with it, there can be no difficulty for the general public to draw their supplies of rice from Fair Price Shops.

VI.—GOVERNMENT MOTION *RE*: TRANSACTION OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS ON NON-OFFICIAL DAY.

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : Sir, I move—

"That Rule 23 of the Madras Legislative Assembly Rules be suspended and the House do resolve to transact official business on Thursday, the 30th March 1961."

DEPUTY SPEAKER : The question is—

"That Rule 23 of the Madras Legislative Assembly Rules be suspended and the House do resolve to transact official business on Thursday, the 30th March 1961."

The motion was put and carried.

VII.—GOVERNMENT BILL.

THE MADRAS CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES BILL, 1961 (L.A. BILL NO. 22 OF 1961).

THE HON. SRI R. VENKATARAMAN : Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move—

"That the Madras Co-operative Societies Bill, 1961 (L.A. Bill No. 22 of 1961),[a] be referred to a Select Committee of the House consisting of the following 20 Members of the Legislative Assembly :—

1. The Hon. Sri M. Bhaktavatsalam.
2. The Hon. Sri C. Subramaniam.
3. Sri C. R. Ramaswami.
4. Sri P. G. Karuthiruman.
5. Sri G. Narayanaswami Naidu.
6. Dr. (Srimathi) T. S. Soundaram Ramachandran.
7. Sri A. P. C. Veerabahu.
8. Sri R. Krishnasami Naidu.
9. Sri K. S. Subramania Gounder.
10. Sri A. Mariappan.

[a] Published in the *Fort St. George Gazette*, dated the 28th March 1961.